

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 constitute all currently pending claims in the application. Claims 1, 2, 8-11, 14-17, and 20-23 are currently amended. Claims 24 and 25 are newly added.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 8-10, 15 and 17-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 2001-277524 A to Kitahara ("Kitahara '524").

Applicant traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Independent claims 1 and 20 are amended so as to recite "the head case section is separated by a vacancy from the sealing section at the first area opposed to the liquid supply passage". Please note that the "first area" and the "second area" recited in amended claims 1 and 20 differ from the "first part" (232 in Figure 5) and the "second part" (231 in Figure 5), as shown in the attached sketch 1.

Applicant believes that Kitahara '524 does not disclose the first area which is thinner than the second area and is opposed to the liquid supply passage. Further, in Figure 1 of Kitahara '524, the head case 2 is in contact with the sealing section (elements 5 and 6), not separated by a vacancy from the sealing section at the first area opposed to the liquid supply passage 9. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Rejections Under U.S.C. § 103

A. Claims 5, 16 and 23

Claims 5, 16 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kitahara '524 in view of Tanaka et al. Applicant traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

As noted above, Kitahara '524 fails to teach the first area which is thinner than the second area and is opposed to the liquid supply passage. Tanaka fails to make up for this deficiency of Kitahara '524, as Tanaka is cited merely for its alleged teaching "that the second part is placed only in the tip side of the liquid supply passage partition wall parts." (Office Action at 6.) Thus, Kitahara '524 and Tanaka, taken alone or in combination for what they would have taught to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention, fail to teach or suggest each and every element of claims 5, 16 and 23. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

B. Claim 6

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kitahara '524 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,322,203 B1 to Kitahara ("Kitahara '203"). Applicant traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

As noted above, Kitahara '524 fails to teach the first area which is thinner than the second area and is opposed to the liquid supply passage. Kitahara '203 fails to make up for this deficiency of Kitahara '524, as Kitahara '203 is cited merely for its alleged teaching of "a third part outside the area wherein the head case section is placed, wherein the third part is placed in at

least one of the tip side of the liquid supply passage partition wall parts and the base side of the liquid supply passage partition wall parts.” (Office Action at 7.) Thus, Kitahara ‘524 and Kitahara ‘203, taken alone or in combination for what they would have taught to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention, fail to teach or suggest each and every element of claims 5, 16 and 23. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objects to claims 7, 11-14 and 22 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but notes that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant respectfully holds in abeyance the rewriting of these claims into independent form, pending the resolution of issues regarding their parent claims.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Applicant herewith petitions the Director of the USPTO to extend the time for reply to the above-identified Office Action for an appropriate length of time if necessary. Unless a check is attached, any fee due under 37 U.S.C. § 1.17(a) is being paid via the USPTO Electronic Filing System (EFS). The USPTO is also directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
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the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

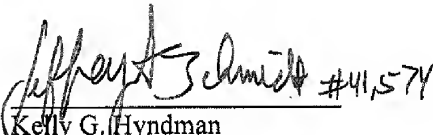
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Sketch 1

